

THOUSAND AND ONE
OBJECTIONS TO
SECRET SOCIETIES

BY

REV. J. W. BOOK, R. D.,

AUTHOR OF

Short Line and Side Switches.

(The latter partly written by Rev. T. J. Jenkins.)

NEW EDITION.

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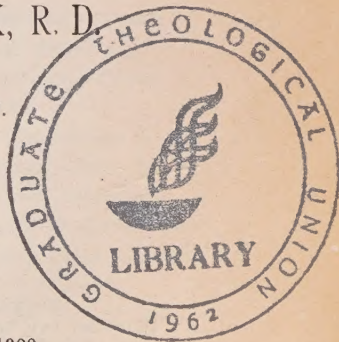
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Secret Societies

BY

Rev. J. W. BOOK, R. D.

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PREFACE.

Encouraged by the liberal patronage I received both as to the SHORT LINE TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH and as to the SIDE SWITCHES OF THE SHORT LINE, I appear before a generous public with THOUSAND AND ONE OBJECTIONS TO SECRET SOCIETIES.

My success is largely due to the *Press* and the *Clergy*: the former introduced me to the latter, who in turn patronized me freely; no doubt not unfrequently at a personal sacrifice. To the one as well as to the other I shall attribute success in the future.

This booklet I write for the following reasons:

1. This is an age of *Unions* and *Combines*.
2. At every step Catholics are importuned to affiliate themselves with one or more.
3. Our people are frequently tempted to do so; not from sinister motives, but because they fail to see the dangers to which they expose themselves.
4. Those having charge of souls, as a rule, find their time too limited to stop and point out the dangers to every one about to fall overboard.
5. In this pamphlet—I might call it a nutshell—all objections, usually only platitudes, brought against the Church on account of her attitude towards SECRET SOCIETIES, are answered in a simple and popular manner.

THE AUTHOR.

Acc. 1347

NIHIL OBSTAT,

HERMANUS ALERDING.

IMPRIMATUR,

FRANCISCUS SILAS,

EPISCOPUS VINCENNOPOLITANUS.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

CHAPTER I.

. . . NAME AND OBJECT. . .

Thomas: I come to your Reverence this evening on a very important mission, a mission that seems to engross in our day the minds of the American people. However, Father, I do not wish to monopolize your time; do tell me, are you at leisure just now?

Father: I am, sir; especially if your mission is of so much importance.

Thomas: Well; it is of great interest to me as well as to some of my friends. You see, Father, we are just starting on the voyage of this life, full of *ups and downs*. Of course, *competition is the life of trade*, but too much of it has a depressing influence on a young man wishing to keep up with the progress of this great world. One man is not the world;

we need mutual assistance; therefore, we meet face to face with *combines*, *trusts* and *societies*. By the way, Father, I think the Catholic Church is too strict in some things, for instance, as to *secret societies*. *Only good men belong to them*; they are *charitable* institutions and the members *help each other in business*. To tell the truth, I am getting more liberal on some questions; though, far be it from me to live or die anything else but a Catholic. Father, what do you think about the propriety of joining one or two secret societies?

Father: You take me by surprise, Thomas. I have always looked upon you as a man of deep thought and well-grounded faith. But, I see you are dyed in liberalism and your faith is becoming very unsound. To be *liberal* in assisting the poor, the orphan and the widow is a noble and Christian trait; on the other hand to be *liberal* in receiving or rejecting truths revealed by God is nonsense pure and simple. Think for one moment of God speaking to you directly or through His divinely instituted Church, and consider yourself weighing His words in the scales of human reason to see whether they should be accepted or rejected! This would be conceit in you and

an insult offered to your Maker, and this is the sum and substance of a *liberal* religion. You, Thomas, must have moved in the society of those, who were very narrow-minded or whose education has been sadly neglected. They are superficial thinkers; they have learned by heart a few bombastic and meaningless phrases, which fill them to overflowing. To follow these men blindly is to act the part of an ape. You are a man; therefore act manly. You have much more right to weigh their words than they have to weigh God's words. Weigh them and weigh them well—give each word its full meaning and its full force, and you will not be considered *liberal* by the world.

Thomas: I know Father, “not everything that glitters is gold;” but, we must give our neighbors due credit. Many things in secret societies commend themselves to Christians in general and even to us Catholics.

Father: It is surely not the name?

Thomas: Well, what objection could you have to the word Freemason?

Father: Its a misnomer. Members of freemasonry are never *free* and seldom *ma-*
sons. They absent themselves from home—they spend hours at the lodge-room—they re-

turn late at night to wife and children who ask impatiently: "Papa what have you been doing so long?"

"Dear wife and beloved children, please, do not insist on an answer to this question. You see, I am not only a *mason*, but am also *free*, though I have taken an iron-clad oath never to breathe to you my wife and to you my sons and daughters, what I know and do." Thomas, is this freedom?

Furthermore, most members of this society are not *masons* at all. They are clerks, book-keepers, teachers, preachers, tailors and sewing-machine agents: men who would not and could not handle a trowel. And yet they are pleased to call themselves *masons*. This is humbug. As a rule masons (mechanics) build up; but, sometimes they are called upon to tear down a building. In the latter sense the members of this organization may be called *masons* with some propriety, for, as we shall see, they are engaged in the nefarious work of tearing down God's Church.

Thomas: What about the name Odd Fellow?

Father: The name condemns itself. Odd means queer—*Queer Fellows*. If they consider themselves *queer* they can have no objections to our doing so.

Thomas: I admit, the Free Masons as well as the Odd Fellows have been somewhat unfortunate in naming their organizations. However, what objections could be raised against the Knights of Pythias on this score?

Father: One thing is commendable in them; they show their colors at once; they exhibit their opposition to Christianity by their very name. Why have they chosen a *heathen* as their patron?

Thomas: But, Father, Pythias was full of brotherly love—ever ready to assist his fellow-man.

Father: Yes, especially a certain man. However, why have recourse to *heathenism* to find a model man? Has not Christianity produced thousands and millions of models for us to follow? Our orphan asylums, our hospitals, our institutions for the insane, deaf and dumb, our homes for the old and infirm; all are the fruits of Christianity. To *heathenism* these charitable institutions were a *tabula rasa*.

To tell the truth, Thomas, the devil had his hand in this. He is a sharp and shrewd fellow; he said to himself the victory is half won, if I only succeed in drawing the attention of men from Christianity. In the case of these Knights he succeeds well, admirably

well. A *heathen* patron was preferred to a Christian.

Thomas: Evidently, the choice was not very flattering to Christians. However we must look at the ways of the world *cum grano salis*. Let me call your attention to one more secret society, I mean the Knights of Honor. Surely, there can be no objection to their name. Christians and heathens ought to be men of honor. These Knights tell us only good men belong to their order.

Father: They do so, it is true; and I have been told so by them time and again. But, they are sometimes reckless in handling the truth. One member made this assertion in my presence when I knew his wife was refused credit in his name for a box of shoe-blackening.

We must look at the question from a Catholic standpoint. A man without faith is not a *good* man. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," says the Apostle of the Gentiles. A man who is divorced from his lawful wife and marries another is also a bad man. One who does not hear the Church is anything but good, for our Savior says: "If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." As a rule, the most godless men occupy the most prominent posi-

tions in these lodges; men like Ingersoll are received with open arms, provided they pay their dues. Now, to say that *only good men* belong to them is enough to provoke a smile from every man of common sense.

Thomas: You must remember, however, Father, even in the Catholic Church, we have many bad men.

Father: Indeed we have; and for this very reason we never claim that *only good men* belong to us. Let the Knights of Honor *go and do likewise*. Thomas, you must not nibble at every bait these fellows throw out.

Thomas: I see, Father, you are a stickler on words. We must bear in mind, however, it's not all in the name. The name is to the end what the shell is to the kernel. Look at the end these secret societies have in view.

Father: What is the end?

Thomas: To assist each other, to practice charity and *do good* generally.

Father: The very answer I anticipated, an answer that misleads, not to say dupes many. Suppose a father at the head of a family consisting of a wife and six children. He gets sick and dies, leaving his beloved in a very precarious condition. The last rites have been performed—it is a cold and dreary win-

ter night—the mourners are poorly housed—the cold blasts of winter force themselves into the little hut—the clothing barely covers the limbs—the repast is anything but sumptuous and the bedding is thin. In this dilemma a happy thought strikes the mother—she recalls to mind that the Masonic Lodge, a very *charitable* institution, is just now in session. Surely, she consoles herself: they will come to the assistance of my fatherless children in their forlorn condition. She goes, she hastens, she raps at the door of the lodge, high up in the air, it is true, as if it meant: do not approach us. But she hears steps—Brother ROOFER comes and asks the question: “*who is out there.*” “A poor widow, left by her late husband with six children in the most destitute circumstances. I come to the lodge, known the world over by its great deeds of charity, and respectfully ask for assistance in this sad hour of bereavement.” “My good lady, was your late husband a mason?” “No, he was not; but this *humanitarian* institution, I presume, will succor the sorely afflicted regardless of the ties of affiliation.”

“Madam, having but little time at my disposal just now, I must say you are mistaken. Though our order is a very *charitable* insti-

tution, yet, as a rule, we assist those widows only whose husbands have been members thereof. Therefore, under the circumstances, I must beg to be excused—at a later period we may reconsider the matter.”

Thomas, what do you think of this much boasted *charity*. I say it hardly deserves the name. Why not call it simply justice? If we render assistance to those only who have brought in their *hard* cash in the shape of monthly dues, we do nothing more than return to others what in justice belongs to them. As well might an insurance company claim to be a charity-dispensing institution. What is true of the Free Masons may be said of all other secret societies.

Thomas: Father, again I must consider you somewhat extreme. What would become of the treasury, if, excuse the expression, every Tom, Dick and Harry could lay his hands on it? Self-protection is the first law of nature. For instance, your C. K. of A. Branch protects the treasury as well as the masons do. And were they not to do so, it would soon become bankrupt.

Father: The C. K. of A., unlike secret organizations, does not pretend to be as charitable as *humanity is broad*.

Thomas : We often read of Free Masons, for instance, making liberal donations to cities, visited by great plagues, such as the yellow fever.

Father : We also read of other people doing this; business men, for example.

Thomas : Some secret societies have orphan asylums.

Father : I admit, there are a few institutions of this kind. Furthermore, it would be too bad if they had none at all, especially after boasting so much about *humanitarianism*, *charity* and *brotherly love*. On the other hand, the country is dotted with Catholic benevolent institutions, such as hospitals, orphanages, foundling houses and homes for the old and infirm. Without having recourse to the *cover of darkness* we attend to the wants of our fellow-men in broad daylight.

CHAPTER II.

. . SECRECY AND OATH. . .

Thomas : By *cover of darkness* you mean, I presume, *secrecy*, to which the Church is so much opposed. However, in this world *secrets* are very common: we have family secrets, business secrets, and, by the way, secrets even in the Church; take for instance the great secret of the confessional.

Father : There is nothing alarming about a family secret. Even if the end and means should tend to one or other unlawful object, there would be as many divisions as there are families and, consequently, neither Church nor state could be imperiled: *In union there is strength*. Furthermore, who ever heard of a family taking an iron-clad oath to keep a secret?

Business secrets are equally harmless. What objection could be raised to a *mark*, by which the store-keeper recognizes the value of his goods? His memory is not supposed to be better than that of other people.

As to confession, it is a secret, and not a

secret; an inviolable secret as to the confessor, but not so to the penitent. In other words, Thomas, you may tell what *you* have revealed in the confessional. Tell me, did you ever take an oath not to do so?

Thomas : No; no priest ever exacted this of me. On this question I am mistaken. What holds good for the confessional, however, may not take quite so well with benevolent organizations. You see, Father, what is every body's business is nobody's business. Secrecy is almost indispensable—a lodge room is not supposed to be a public hall, frequented by any one who may choose to do so at the expense of the initiated. Catholic Knights themselves object to this; at least, we never hear of outsiders attending their meetings.

Father : In this respect, it is true, the C. K. of A. are not troubled, though they transact business with open doors. In civilized countries people, as a rule, have so much politeness that they could not be induced to impose upon others—*they mind their own business*. Suppose, however, some one were to attend the meeting uninvited, no disturbance would be raised by the members as long as he behaved himself. They are not engaged in a nefarious work; consequently, they

have no reason to shun the light like thieves who are lovers of darkness.

Thomas: But, Father, there seems to be a charm about secrecy—it cements one member to the other—discard it and the best organized society will fall under its own weight. Therefore, it is a necessity.

Father: Either the end of a society is good or it is not; if it is, it will recommend itself; if not, the society ought to fall, and the sooner the better. Take the Catholic Church—she is spread over the face of the earth—she has seen the mightiest empires fall—she is the best organized institution in the world—her doors are open to every nation under the sun—the powers of hell itself prevail not against her; she is a standing proof that a society can stand without *secrecy* and iron-clad oaths.

By the way let me remark, *secrecy* is only incidentally forbidden; for, if the *end* be laudable and the *means* to attain this end lawful, *secrecy per se* would make no society objectionable. On the other hand if both, the one and the other be good, why conceal them? Why not throw the doors wide open that the world may see and assist in the promotion of the good work? By a divine right the Church has charge of souls and consequently she has

a right to know *what* they are doing and *how* they are doing it. But, how can she judge of the lawfulness of an act if it is not submitted to her judgment? As a rule, people like to speak of and hold out in bold relief a good thing; if, however, they band together with the avowed purpose to conceal the *end* and the *means*, there is grave reason to believe that the one or the other, if not both, is immoral and consequently reprehensible.

All that the Church requires is that the end sought for be legitimate, and the means to attain that end sanctioned by God's law. Now, surely every Catholic who knows anything of his religion must be aware that no man can lawfully form an association or enter into one for a sinful or wicked purpose. And it is equally certain that no matter how good the end may be, or how desirable, the Church can never sanction wicked or unlawful means to obtain it. Notwithstanding the calumnies so often uttered by her enemies, the Church has always held as a fundamental truth that the end does not justify the means. In this free land every legitimate object can be attained in an open manner. Men can here give full expression to their convictions and aspirations, and labor to attain them in the clear

light of open day. What need, then, can there be of secret, oath bound associations? Something must be wrong in the end proposed when men, in a free land, must meet in the dark to obtain it. When men shun the light and seek darkness, it is a proof that their 'works are evil.

Thomas: I notice, Father, you refer quite frequently to the oath taken by the members of forbidden societies. You must be aware, however, that many lodges do not administer an oath at all—the members simply promise “upon their word of honor” to refrain from divulging the secrets entrusted to them. Is there anything wrong in this?

Father: Hardly, especially, if the *end* and *means* be good. But, how will the Church know this, when the Brothers mutually pledge themselves not to make any revelations to the *profane*? Practically, therefore, the pledge may do as much harm as the oath. At any rate it is very unmanly to make blind promises—it is cowardly. Sensible men wish to know what obligations they take upon themselves before they make rash promises. At least they do this in every other walk of life. Strange to say, that men will permit themselves to be *blindfolded* in this one particular

—they pledge each other something of which they are supposed to know nothing. I repeat it, it is not manly.

Thomas: I see the point, Father. Permit me to ask: Is it sinful to take an oath administered in a lodge-room? No one disputes the right of the Court administering it.

Father: An oath should be administered by lawful authority, be it civil or ecclesiastical, and taken only for grave and sufficient cause, for we read: "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." "Swearing, or taking an oath, is calling God to witness that we speak the truth, or that we will keep our promise," says our catechism. What truth is the applicant to speak, or what promises is he to keep? Are they good bad or indifferent? He knows nothing about them.

Therefore, he takes the *name of God in vain* at the very first step; therefore he sins. It is true, in *some* secret societies an oath is not taken; but in most of them it is, or at least an equivalent to one. Take for instance, the Knights of Pythias, and let Archbishop Janssens speak:

"The members in masks are clothed in black robes; loud talk or heavy walking must be avoided; the candidate is dressed in a white robe and his eyes are blindfolded; the outer guard is commanded

not to converse with him in a frivolous manner. With grave solemnity he is asked whether he believes in a Supreme Being; absolute obedience is expected of him and he takes the oath to keep secret forever, all he may hear or be instructed in hereafter regarding the mysteries of the order. He is made to kneel down by the side of a coffin, containing sometimes a skeleton. He places his hand on the Bible. Members cover him with their lances as a warning of what may happen should he fail to keep the oath. The oath of secrecy refers to things, present and things in the future, and is as follows: 'I, in the presence of these true and tried brethern, do most solemnly promise, declare and swear, that I will never reveal to the day of my death and will keep secret all the mysteries, in which I have been or in which I may hereafter be instructed.' He declares the same about passwords, etc., and finishes 'so help me God', and in token of sincerity he must kiss the Bible. Some members pretend that the ceremonies of the order mean nothing; if this be so, then the ceremonies are simply a blasphemous mockery of God, abusing the sacredness of an oath, and of the Holy Bible. But all the ceremonies, preceding and following, clearly show that the order is in real earnest when it imposes this oath on the candidate. These quotations I have made from a ritual of the order lying before me.

The secrets are not allowed to be made manifest 'except it be in a regular lodge or to an authorized officer of the order.' "

Thomas: Under this aspect the question gets more serious.

Father: Indeed it does; but this is not all. The candidate of the third rank calls God as witness that "he may suffer all the anguish and torments possible for man to suffer, if ever by word or sign he exposes the secret work or ceremonies of the order."

Consider for one moment what this applicant does: he obliges himself to work for an *end* unknown to himself, an *end* which may, consequently, be very bad; he obliges himself to make use of *means* which may be very immoral in their tendency, for he "promises to obey all orders that may be given;" he obliges himself to cooperate with an organization whose supreme court, according to Archbishop Janssens, is the Council of Ten consisting of the King and his nine Counsellors, "from whose decision there is no appeal, whose edicts once sent forth are established law."

Thomas: Evidently, this would be blind obedience.

Father: Yes, more. To surrender one's liberty of action to an unknown leader or law-giver, to sacrifice one's personal responsibility in favor of one who is irresponsible simply because he is lurking in the dark: is it not an

act of supreme folly? Is not this slavery most abject? Most debasing? And “by what authority” says the same Archbishop, “does the chancellor or prelate of a Pythian lodge assume the right to make a Catholic kneel down, kiss the Bible (most likely a Protestant one) and swear by God that he will keep secret things present and in the future till the day of death? Pythians, who call themselves Catholics, dilate on the arbitrariness of the Church, which has her power and authority from Christ, the son of God—and they kneel down and take an oath by order of a man who has no other power or authority over them but that which he assumes.” In short, Thomas, pledges, solemn promises, or oaths of this nature, forcibly call to our mind the executioner of St. John the Baptist. He took a wicked oath and kept it.

Thomas: To me this discussion is getting interesting. If it is not imposing on good nature, let us consider the Masonic oath. I should like to know something about it, though I must confess, I have my doubts whether the *profane* know anything concerning it. If any society keeps its secrets, I believe Masons do. What say you, Father?

Father: Undoubtedly, they try hard to

keep the oath from being made public, and for good reasons, because it is a terrible blasphemy. I have no hesitancy in saying that any one who has taken it, is heartily ashamed of it. Of course, this is quite an inducement to keep the secret. In the first place, however, how few are they to whom secrets can be entrusted? Our most intimate friends, as experience teaches, bear watching. Our *intimate* friends also have *intimate* friends. The latter are trusted as much as the former. Men have wives, and wives are not only inquisitive but also experts at unveiling. Consequently, not to speak of the many malicious perjurers to be found in this world, there are many avenues leading to the exposition of the secrets.

In the second place, the question may be asked : is it not a duty to make the revelation? Either the *end* and *means* of the Freemasons are good, or they are not; if not, the oath is not binding on the conscience. What answer does our catechism give to the question "Are we bound to keep an oath?"

Thomas : "Certainly unless we have sworn, to do evil; in such a case to keep an oath would be to commit another sin."

Father : Now, Thomas, are you prepared

to say that the oath has never been revealed? that there never has been a perjurer in the ranks of Masonry, or that no one has ever opened his lips from conscientious motives, especially, when the Church's welfare or the State's stability was imperiled by unscrupulous demagogues?

Thomas: Looking at the matter in question from this standpoint, the aspect changes materially. But, if you know the Masonic oath, let us have it at once.

Father: Before I accede to your wishes, I must remark that Masons are very lavish with their oaths, and these are taken at every step; that there may be a difference as to the wording according to the rite, French, Scottish or Royal Arch (York). Here is a specimen:

"I,———, of my own free will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God, and this worshipful lodge, erected to him and dedicated to holy Saint John do hereby and hereon (Master presses his gavel or hand on candidate's hand,) most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, that I will always hail, ever conceal and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts or points of the hidden mysteries of Freemasonry which may have been heretofore, shall be at this time or any future period, communicated to me as such, to any person or persons whomsoever,

except it be to a true and lawful brother Mason, or in a regularly constituted lodge of Masons; nor unto him, nor them, until by strict trial, due examination or legal information, I shall have found him or them, as lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not write, print, paint, stamp, stain, cut, carve, mark, or engrave them, nor cause the same to be done, on anything movable or immovable capable of receiving the least impression of a word, syllable, letter or character, whereby the same may become legible or intelligible to any person or persons under the canopy of heaven, and the secrets of Freemasonry unlawfully obtained through my unworthiness.

All this I most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, with a firm and steadfast resolution to perform the same, without any hesitation, mental reservation or secret evasion of mind whatever; binding myself under no less a penalty than that of having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots, and buried in the rough sands of the sea, at low-water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, should I ever knowingly violate this my Entered Apprentice obligation. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same."

Thomas : Horrible, indeed! However, what assurance have we that this is one of their oaths.

Father : Jacob O. Doesburg, of Holland,

Ottowa Co., Michigan, says so : and he ought to know, for among other things he “deposeth” before a Notary Public that he was a Freemason and that he “very carefully revised the book entitled FREEMASONRY ILLUSTRATED, published by Ezra A. Cook & Co. of Chicago, Illinois.” To this he not only signs his name, but gives us the following voucher :

State of Michigan, }
County of Ottawa, } ss.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21st day of October, A. D. 1879.

{ Seal } Isaac Fairbank,

Notary Public in and for Ottawa Co., Mich.
If necessary, Thomas, I can give you more sworn affidavits from Doesburg’s own work—here is the book.

Thomas : Not at all necessary. Freemasons retort, we cannot believe *traitors* even when under oath, and it seems to me they do this with good reasons.

Father : I know, Masons are fond of yelling at the top of the voice : *Traitors!* but everybody can yell; however there is no argument in it. If these gentlemen think they are imposed upon by these so-called *traitors*

why do they not produce their ritual in proof to the contrary? It will be accepted by the world.

Furthermore, Thomas, suppose you were to know from your personal experience that a certain, organized body is plotting against the interests of society, would any sane man call it treason were you to reveal the fact?

Thomas : By no means, Father; however, is it not highly probable that the Masons changed their oath after it became public property, just like they change *signs* and *grips*, from time to time? This again would leave us in ignorance as to the oath.

Father : For the sake of argument, let us admit the supposition. But is it reasonable to suppose that the obligations would assume a milder form? To reduce the number of *traitors* it would necessitate more and stronger bands to keep the weaker members in tow.

I have before me "Masonry Exposed and Explained" by Leo Taxil, former Member of Lodge Les Amis De L'Honneur Francais, of the Grand Orient of France. This man needs no introduction to you. Passing over the oath of Initiation to the French Rite as well as the Scottish Rite, I shall quote him as to the oath of Initiation to the Rite of Misraim :

"I swear in the name of the All Powerful Supreme Architect of worlds never to reveal the secrets, signs, grips, words, doctrines and usages of Freemasons and guard thereupon an eternal silence. I promise and swear to the All Powerful never to betray anything about them, neither by pen, signs, words nor gesture; to never write or cause to be written, lithograph, or print anything about them, to never divulge, in any way whatsoever, anything that has been confided to me up to this time nor which may be in the future. I submit and engage myself to suffer the following penalty in case I shall violate my oath; that they burn my lips with a red hot iron! that they cut off my head! that they pull out my tongue! that they cut my throat! that my dead body be hung in a Lodge during the admission of a new Brother, to be a fright to those who, like me, should be tempted to become perjurers! that then my odious remains be burnt and the ashes be cast to the winds in order that there may remain no souvenir nor trace of my treason."

Thomas : This may be called swearing with a vengeance.

Father : Yes; if this is not "calling the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain," I must confess, I am at a loss to know what it is. Remember, too, the oath refers to the *future* as well as to the present. In other words this means: it matters not, how wicked our designs may be in the future, how contrary to the

dictates of my conscience, I shall give my consent by my silence.

Thomas : To me this is an eye-opener—evidently such reckless swearing is unpardonable in a man who remembers the first lessons of his little catechism. *Ignorance*, of course, *is not bliss*, but, it does seem to me, it will excuse many violating the second commandment at the very first step towards a *secret* Lodge. Besides, we must not lose sight of the fact that the forbidden societies instil religious principles and have *regular* services, prescribed by a ritual in charge of the appointed *chaplain*, etc. Every one knows this and, therefore, it will not do to say, they discard all religion.

Father : Ignorance may excuse to some extent, but *gross* ignorance will not do so, especially, in the case under consideration. A man, like yourself, who has studied his catechism, who has attended the Catholic school, who has heard time and again from the Catholic pulpit: “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain:” this man, I say, cannot take the oath in question on the plea of ignorance; if he does, it is gross—I mean—culpable ignorance. As to religion, it is frequently hurled into our teeth by these

blind votaries of *secrecy*. A certain nominal Catholic had the impertinence to say in my presence and at a public meeting: "Since I joined a lodge I have more religion than I was wont to have." The truth is, he never has had more than was absolutely necessary to keep his head above water. Now he has scarcely enough to retain the shadow of a claim his forefathers had on a lot in the Catholic cemetery. He used to go to mass on Sundays and he was in the habit of approaching the Holy table once or twice a year. Now he has *so much* religion that he has dispensed with duties imposed upon us by God Himself.

I know of another whom we had to throw overboard, because he was not worth a straw. He fell into a Knights of Pythias lodge and forthwith he was made chaplain. Give him credit for one thing, however, even as chaplain he never made the proclamation: "Now I have more religion than I used to have." No doubt, Ingersoll himself would accept a chaplaincy in a lodge-room and wear the insignia with becoming dignity.

CHAPTER III.

. . . CHAPLAINCY. . .

Father: By the way who *appoints* the chaplains, whose office it is to administer to the living and dead?

Thomas: The Lodge, of course.

Father: True; but, whence have its members the authority to *appoint* any one to an office of a religious character? It was the will of our divine Savior that all men, at all times, and in all places should accept His doctrines and thereby attain life everlasting. "Go ye, therefore, and *teach all nations teaching* them to observe *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you." (Math. xxviii, 19. 20.) "Go ye unto the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark, xvi, 15.) What a task! However, that the work might be successfully carried on "to the consummation of the world," He commissions the Twelve as He had been commissioned: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." (John xx, 21.) The apostles then were *authorized* to teach

the people and the people in turn were bound to obey. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (Mark xvi, 16.) "He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." (Luke, x, 16.)

Thomas: This is undeniable; but, who was *authorized* to issue these papers after the ascent of our Lord?

Father: Following in the footsteps of their Master, the Apostles did so. "*Separate* me Saul and Barnabas, for the work to which I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away." (Acts xiii, 2. 3.) St Paul reminds Timothy of the duty imposed upon him by the imposition of hands in the following unequivocal language: "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the imposition of my hands." (Tim. ii. 1, 6.) In the Acts we read: "The Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to *rule* the Church of God." (Tim. xx, 28.) Yes, in writing to the Romans, St. Paul says: "How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And

how can they preach unless they be sent?" (Tim. x, 14. 15.)

Thomas : This is very plain. But, to use the same expression, could the Lodges not *send*?

Father : No; because they have not been *sent*. It would be conferring something they have not received. To give, you must have. *Nemo dat, quod non habet*.

Thomas : This looks reasonable; however, this is a progressive age, and it seems to me the churches ought to keep abreast with the progress of the world.

Father : It is nonsense to talk about *churches*. Christ established but one Church. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my *church*, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against *it*." (Math. xviii, 18.) In fact He could not establish more than one without contradicting Himself, and this would not be *progressive*. In short, truth is not *progressive*—truth remains truth— 2×2 will be 4 a thousand years hence, as well as it was 20 centuries ago— 2×2 will never equal 5—to say so would be *retrogressive*. *Thomas* do not enlist in the *retrogressive* army, composed of half-witted and half-educated fellows—be *progressive* by complying with the will of God,

which is the embodiment of truth and genuine *progress*. To tell the truth, we Catholics are keeping apace with the times. County officers, in our own day, *qualify* before they take possession of an office within the gift of the people. Perhaps the lowest office in the land is that of constable; yet, even he must *qualify—be sent*. Every bishop and priest in this great country can show his papers; the former has his from the Pope, successor of St. Peter; the latter from his Ordinary; but the *chaplain* has his from the Lodge, which in turn has none to produce: therefore his are null and void; therefore, he assumes a title to which he has no claim whatever; therefore the words of the Highpriest Azarias are applicable to him: “It doth not belong to thee, Ozias, to burn incense to the Lord, but to the priests, that is to the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated for this ministry: go out of the sanctuary, do not despise; for this thing shall not be accounted to thy glory by the Lord God. (II. Paralip. xxvi, 18.)” Furthermore St. Paul says: “Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was.” (Hebr. v, 4.)

Thomas: You must bear in mind that *Preachers* belong to secret societies.

Father: I am well aware of it. But who are

they? You do not consider yourself authorized to *preach*, and *they* have no more authority than you have. When Christ commissioned the Apostles (and their successors), the *Preachers* were not *there* to receive the papers—they came 1,500 years later. By the way, the Knights of Pythias are not content with an ordinary *Chaplain*: they have a *Prelate*, who leads in prayer. He is the expounder of the Pythian religion and its mysteries, “the expounder of the emblem, symbol or skeleton of their *honored and revered Patron Saint, Pythias* he administers the Pythian oath and explains it; he presides at the ceremonies of this religion, and the order so insists on the services of its prelate at the death of members, that it threatens poor widows or relatives not to pay death-benefits unless the deceased member be buried with the prayers and ceremonies of this Pythian prelate.” (Archbp. Janssens).

You, Thomas know what a great dignitary a prelate is in the Catholic Church; you also know that every shoemaker, bricklayer and spittoon cleaner may become a *prelate*, and is this not religious mockery? Is it not presumption on the part of the *prelate* and is it not sinful in you to encourage such unbounded presumption?

Thomas: Looking at it from this standpoint, the *prelacy* seems to be out of place. So far as I know, however, the Bible is *the Book* in almost all secret societies.



CHAPTER IV.

. . THE BIBLE. . .

Father: What Bible; the Protestant or the Catholic?

Thomas: Now, Father, do not be such a stickler—hair-splitter; you know there is not much difference between the one and the other.

Father: I *do* know there is a great difference, and *you* ought to know it.

Let us examine the question more closely:

	Catholic version. No. Chap.	Prot. version. No. Chap.
The Book of Esther has	16.	10.
“ “ “ Daniel “	14.	12.

This in itself would be quite a difference; but in the Prot. version the following books are wanting altogether :

Tobias,	Judith,
Wisdom,	Ecclesiasticus,
Baruch,	I. Machabees,

II. Machabees.

Thomas: I was ignorant of this fact; however, the difference is immaterial if Catholics

and Protestants agree as to the New Testament.

Father: But, they do not agree. In the Catholic Bible we read: "Have not we power to lead about a *woman*, a sister?" (I. Cor. ix, 5) In the Prot. Bible *woman* is rendered *wife*. A wife is always a woman; but a woman is not always a wife: quite a difference.

Again: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, *or* drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." (I. Cor. xi, 27.) Instead of *or* we read in the Prot. Bible *and*. Mark the difference; if *and* is correct, we must partake of the species of wine as well as of the species of bread; if not, it is *ad libitum*.

To find many differences of this nature, read Ward's Errata. Let me call your attention to one discrepancy in the Old Testament, which is very palpable. In Gen. xxxvii, 35, we read: "I will go down to my son into hell mourning." *Hell* is rendered *grave* in the Prot. version. Evidently Jacob did not mean *grave*, for he was under the impression that his son Joseph had been "devoured by a wild beast."

Thomas: The discrepancy between the two bibles seems to be greater than I was aware of.

Father: Yes; and either the Catholic Bible is true, or it is not; if it is true, the other is false, and consequently it is wrong to make use of it. Just imagine yourself in a lodge, where there is a *corrupted* Word of God.

The plain and unvarnished truth is this: most of the votaries of secret societies especially, the more shining lights, do not believe in the Bible.

Thomas: Why would they keep it if, as a rule, they do not believe in or are opposed to it?

Father: As a *bait*. They know that people in general have more or less religion, that recruits would be "few and far between," were not some religious inducements held out.

However, Bro. C. Von Schaick writes in the official Dutch Freemason's Almanac for 1872.

"As matters now stand, the presence of the Bible on our altars is an empty form. . . . From whatever point of view we regard the Bible, we do not hesitate to declare openly, that in our reunions it is out of place, once and forever; since the doctrines of humanity now occupy the most prominent positions, and are taught as the best method of ameliorating the conditions of mankind."

Thomas: I have been told that Freemasons are required to pay their respects to the Bible.

Father : You have been told so; but it is anti-masonic:

“To require that a candidate profess a belief in the divine authenticity of the Bible or a state in the future of rewards and punishment, is a serious innovation in the very body of Masonry. . . . It is anti-masonic to require any religious test, other than that the candidate should believe in God, the Creator and Governor of the Universe.” (Chase’s Digest of Masonic Law, page 208.)

When the Apprentice’s Degree is conferred the following question is asked by the *Worshipful* Master: “What furniture has a lodge?” Candidate: “The Holy Bible, square and compass.” The Bible then is a piece of *furniture*. “Every well regulated lodge must contain a Bible, Square and Compasses, which are technically said to constitute its furniture.” (Mackey’s Lexicon, Art. Furniture.)

I have said enough about the Bible to satisfy the most fastidious.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION. . .

Thomas : Even if we have good reasons to object to the unauthorized chaplains and to a Bible not approved, we must admit, these various secret confraternities *have nothing against religion*; on the contrary, they often, and loudly profess it.

Father : Those who content themselves with “having nothing against religion” are an *indifferent* class of people; in other words, they are neither for God nor against God. In this kind of society it is dangerous to move; for indifference begets indifference. Thomas, were I to conduct myself coolly toward you, you would feel yourself slighted, and ere long you would call my attention to it. God, also, is not and cannot be indifferent as to our attitude toward Him. Therefore, Jesus Christ said: “He that is not for me is against me.”

As to the *religious* character, it cannot be denied the societies in question. They are well aware that it would be bad policy to declare war against Christianity in a country

professedly Christian, at least, as long as recruits are necessary. Let me quote right here a Protestant, Professor Blanchard of Chicago:

“Another fact which will very pleasantly appear to the candid searcher after truth, is that these organizations are religious in character. While this is true of all of them, it is in a marked degree true of Freemasonry and as this organization is the mother and model of other lodges, a detailed examination of its professions and claims in this regard seems needful.

In the first place, the mere looker-on who had never read at all would arrive at the conclusion that Freemasonry was a religious organization. The various Masonic bodies have chaplains, prelates and priests. All of them have what they call an altar. One of them has a baptismal service, by which the children of members of the organization are in a sense inducted into it while yet in infancy. The burial services which are prepared for them in case of death of members of the organization intimate that the person who has belonged to it and died is sure of the eternity of happiness because of his relation to the order. So clear is the impression that ordinary Masons who have no interest in denying the truth, say without hesitation that the man who lives up to his Masonic obligations is sure of heaven. Or, as they more frequently put it, ‘Masonry is good enough religion for me.’

These religious officers and implements, together with the impression produced upon common men by the services of the order, are two proofs that this lodge is religious in character. But the most decisive evidence is contained in the statements of the learned and influential men of the order. For example, we find in Mackey's *Lexicon of Freemasonry*, page 369, an article entitled 'Prayer'. The author says: 'All the ceremonies of our order are prefaced and terminated with prayer, because Masonry is a religious institution.' Mr. Daniel Sickels, a thirty-third degree Mason, who has occupied many if not most of the offices in the higher bodies in New York State, says in his notes on the third degree: 'We now find man complete in morality and intelligence, with a state of religion added, to insure him the protection of the Deity and to guard him against going astray. These three degrees thus form a perfect and harmonious whole; nor can we conceive that anything can be suggested more which the soul of man requires.'" These words are found in his *Free Masons' Monitor*, on pages 97 and 98.

Thomas: I know very little about the Freemasons; but I have every reason to believe that the Pythian Knights form a religious sect: they have a Ritual, in which there is a chapter taken from the Bible; at their meetings they hold a kind of divine service: the society wishes to instil morality into its members; a *Venerable Prelate* conducts the relig-

ious ceremonies; virtue is exalted, and the love of our neighbor is duly implanted in every heart. Now, Father, you are bound to concede that these are good things and, consequently, these people are not opposed to religion. We must even give the devil his dues.

Father : Thomas, your *speech* sounds much better than it is. Let us analyze it. Remember, however, you and I are Catholics and we must look at the matter in question from a Catholic standpoint; in other words we must remain consistent. You say, the Ritual contains a chapter taken from the Bible. I ask, from what Bible, the Catholic or the Protestant? We have seen, there is quite a difference between the one and the other. Either the Protestant Version is true, or it is not; if it is not, as you and I believe, then it is false; and you, Thomas, lend your influence, great or little, to something that is false, and consequently, in the eyes of God not an object of love.

You say, they hold a *kind of divine service*. I in turn ask what service? Is it a Protestant service, a Jewish service or a Pagan service? I have my doubts whether the "Our Father," a prayer taught by the Redeemer of the world, is ever said. I should like to know

what per cent. can recite the Apostles' Creed by heart; of course the "Hail Mary" is not so much as thought of; and imagine, if you can, a Pythian *prelate* saying mass, which is the august sacrifice of the New Law.

You call my attention to the Pythian code of morality. I ask again, what is it? On what is it based? On the *Ten Commandments*? But, how many Knights know the commandments? Even if they do know them, they *only* know them *corrupted*. To convince yourself of this, compare the Protestant Bible with the Catholic—you will find a stumbling block in the very first commandment.

You tell me, the love of our neighbor is deeply implanted. Yes, but it is the love of the *next door* neighbor, a Pythian—the Samaritan is altogether overlooked, though our Savior Himself holds him up as a model for our conduct.

As to the highly spoken-of virtues, what are they? Are they supernatural or merely natural? Is it the virtue of faith? If so, I may ask, what faith? The circumcised, the baptized, and non-baptized belong to secret societies. All, as far as religious convictions are concerned, may be members *in good standing*. What a religious confusion! Is it the

virtue of obedience? But, the Catholic Church is ignored. "He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." Is it the virtue of chastity? But a man may be divorced from *his better half* today, marry a more *congenial* person to-morrow and be *chaplain* in any lodge the day after to-morrow. Of course, this is not St. Paul's doctrine, for he says: "To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband: and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife." (I Cor. vii, 10. 11.) However, what do lodges care about St. Paul?

Thomas: It is astonishing how widely people differ in their opinions. Secret brotherhoods are everlastingly calling our attention to their virtues; you on the other hand show that they are devoid of Christian virtues, which indeed every follower of Christ ought to practice.

Father: Yes, and it is amusing, how some *sharks* can get up, address the *best men* of the community in high-sounding words, badly understood, and actually make them believe that the world moves in them and through

them and that they are virtue personified. No doubt, the *Grand Masters* at headquarters must smile, when they see the shekels, monthly dues of the duped, pour into the treasury, out of which they, hurrahing for "our grand order" make the first and the biggest grab. But we are off the track—pardon the digression.

Thomas: Father, you are extremely hard to please. When I say, that the secret societies are not opposed to religion, I do not mean, of course, that pure Catholicity is taught in any lodge.

Father: And I say, do you wish to be, where it is taught impurely? where the wheat is mixed with the chaff, truth with falsehood?

Thomas: *Broad* Christianity is gaining ground in this country; in our day, people like to stand on a *wide* platform.

Father: A *wide* platform is a good thing in its place; but when the platform is so wide, that you cannot find the man you are looking for, it is a source of inconvenience. This is applicable to people imbued with ideas of *broad* Christianity: their religious views are unsettled, their tenets are indefinite and undefined, their pet doctrines of to-day are thrown overboard to-morrow. This is what the world calls *broad* Christianity, which in reality is

nonsense. Either God has made revelations, or He has not; if He has, we are bound to accept them as they have been made; we have no right to widen or contract them. This is reasonable. You may consider me hard to please; but I believe, and I believe it firmly, that lodges have no more right to talk nonsense than we, the *profane* have. What do you say, Thomas?

Thomas: Nonsense, of course, is nonsense wherever it may be found. But, Father, they tell me, that one of the very first questions put to an applicant, rapping at the door of a secret society is: "Do you believe in God?"

Father: This is a very silly question for it requires but little intelligence to acknowledge the existence of God. However many members do not believe in Him. For instance the Jewish element does not believe in the second person of the blessed Trinity, and He *is* God.

Thomas: I am told that all secret organizations believe in a *Supreme Being*.

Father: Freemasonry believes in the "Supreme Architect of the Universe;" but, I must confess, I do not know the masonic meaning of this expression.

Thomas: Evidently, it means the *Supreme*

Being, to which I just referred—I mean God.

Father: In the first place, I may ask: why use such a conglomeration of words instead of the little and simple word *God*, understood by all men, even of the meanest capacity?

In the second place, by *Supreme Architect of the Universe* they may understand a pantheistical God. Of this God you and I would also be a factor; in other words, you would be, having intelligence, quite a respectable part of the *Supreme Architect of the Universe*.

Thomas: Father, this would be ridiculous. Do tell me, why do these societies talk so much about religion and a Supreme Being?

Father: To hold out inducements to men like yourself, men who seem to be “on the fence,” men who are about to turn their backs upon the “One fold and one Shepherd” and fall over into the Freemason camp.

Again let me quote Professor Blanchard: “Persons, however, who are conversant with the writings on this subject, will understand that while Masonry distinctly claims a religious character, and professes to send those who conform to its obligations to what they call the Grand Lodge above; the organi-

zation is, clearly and distinctively, not only non-Christian, but anti-Christian. This is evident in the first place, from the titles and regalia which are used by the fraternity. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is humble, serving and aspires to be useful to others. The religion of Freemasonry is proud, vain and loves display. It is fairly stuffed with such titles as worshipful master, grand master, grand high priest, grand king, prelate, sovereign, etc.

The fact that the religion of Freemasonry cannot be Christian again comes out in the membership of the order. A man may unite with the church and be a bad man, but he must also be a hypocrite, for he must at least profess sorrow for his sins, love for God, love for his fellow-men and a purpose to live a holy life. No church will receive a man unless he so covenants; but men are received into the Masonic church on the payment of an initiation fee and taking the oath without any purpose expressed or understood to live a holy life. The prayerless, godless, profane, drunken members of the lodges do not break any part of the covenant if they continue in their vices and sins.

In fact, strange as it may appear, Masons

seem quite proud to say that pirates, savages, robbers and murderers are members of their order in good and regular standing. The book entitled 'The Mystic Tie,' containing facts and opinions illustrating the character and tendency of Freemasonry, edited by Albert G. Mackey whose Lexicon of Freemasonry, has already been mentioned, contains we believe something like nine different articles showing that pirates, savages, robbers, murderers, or men combining two or more of these characters, have been Masons in good standing and have promptly recognized their Masonic obligations when called upon to do so. It does not require argument with intelligent persons to show that an organization admitting persons of these classes, without any professed purpose to change their actions, is not Christian.

Still further explicit statements of the later Masonic writers contradict directly the earliest authors who claim the Masonic religion is Christian. Webb says in the quotation above made, that Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, Buddhists, Pirates, Confucians and pagans in general, are all eligible to Freemasonry.

On page 402 of Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry, above quoted, under the article of

‘Religion’ the author says: ‘The religion of Freemasonry is pure theism, on which its different members may ingraft their own peculiar opinions; but they are not permitted to introduce them into the lodge or to connect their truth or falsehood with the truth of Masonry.’ This statement is of high authority, and its support is perfectly plain. The Christian who joins the Masonic lodge may engraft his belief in Christ on the deism of Masonry, but he must not introduce his Christianity into the lodge nor, connect his truth or falsehood with that of Freemasonry.

The article, ‘Blazing Star,’ on the 61st page of this same Lexicon, says: ‘Formerly the blazing star was said to commemorate that light which appeared to guide the wise men of the East to the place of our Savior’s nativity: but this allusion, however beautiful, interferes with the universal character of Masonry; it is now generally omitted and the blazing star is said to be an emblem of Divine Providence. That is, formerly the ritual of the lodge contained here a recognition of our Savior, but as this would interfere with the universal character of Masonry, it is to be stricken out. In Chase’s Digest of Masonic Law, on pages 207 and 208, the writer says: ‘The Jews, the Chinese, the Turks, each rejects either the New Testament or the Old, or both, and yet we see no reason, why they should not be made Masons.’ In fact Blue

Lodge Masonry has nothing whatever to do with the Bible. It is not founded on the Bible. If it was it would not be Masonry. It would be something else."

Thomas : In Morris' Dictionary, Article "Prayer" we read:

"Every important undertaking in Masonry is both begun and completed with prayer. The prayers given in the hand-books of the Blue Lodge are such as in which all Masons, whatever their religious faith, may unite. In the orders of Knighthood the prayers are as a matter of course strictly and intensely Christian. In the third degree a sublime prayer, adapted from the 14th chapter of Job, is made in American lodges an essential part of the ritual of Raising."—

Father : We also read:

"The truth is, that Masonry is undoubtedly a religious institution—its religion being of that universal kind in which all men agree, and which, handed down through a long succession of ages from that ancient priesthood who first taught it, embraces the great tenets of the existence of God, the immortality of the soul,—tenets which by its peculiar symbolic language, it has preserved from its foundation, and still continues in the same beautiful way to teach. Beyond this, for its religious faith, we must not and cannot go."—*Mackey's Masonic Jurisprudence*, page 95.

"The religion, then, of Masonry is *pure theism* on which its different members *engraft* their own pecu-

liar *opinions* but they are not permitted to introduce them into the lodge, or to connect their truth or falsehood with the truth of Masonry.”—*Mackey's Lexicon, Art. Religion.*

Some lodges go a step farther:

“I affirm that the name of God is a word void of sense.”—*Liege Lodge, 1865. A. Neut. XI. p. 287.*

“We must not only place ourselves above different religions but above *all belief in any God whatever.*” —*Ibid, 228.*

“It is only fools who speak and dream still of a God.”—*Ibid.*

Thomas: This may be true of European Freemasons; but not of our people.

Father: Archbishop Janssens says:

“The order of the K. of P. first weakens, then destroys the faith of Catholics; it substitutes the religion of man for the revealed religion of Christ; it ties a man with an iron chain of oath and obedience to an order, closely allied to the Freemasons; its chiefs are in good standing in the Masonic fraternity and use their order for a mere pretence by which to draw Catholics to the Lodge and away from the Church.”

Thomas: There are *two sides* to every question. From a religious aspect, ceremonies in all lodges may be questionable; but every convention of men presupposes a ceremonial of some kind. A deaf and dumb society would be neither instructive nor entertaining.

They say, every ceremony has a *deep meaning* not understood by the common people.

Father: Very *deep* indeed. Let us consider “the *Prince of Mercy*” twenty-sixth degree. It is called *Scottish Trinitarian*. Its aim, says the Ritual, is the redemption of ignorant minds, prisoners of Error. It is necessary to deliver them by teaching them the Truth.

“After making the Candidate make nine steps in the form of a serpent, they attach to his shoulders two wings that he moves by means of mechanism. He has his eyes bandaged. He is made to ascend nine steps which lead to a platform and ordered to throw himself into the air and ascend into the third heaven. The Candidate obeys, and moving his wings, throws himself off, falling on a tightly drawn canvas, held at the ends by several strong Brothers. They then announce to him that he is in the space of the heavens where the wandering stars roam. In the same fashion he is made to pass to the second heaven. There, they bring his hand near a lighted candle and tell him that the heat he feels is that given out by the fixed stars.

They make him swallow some soap-suds; that represents the ether of the second heaven. His body from that time, acquires the property of resisting the action of fire. After which they balance him in the air, that is to say, throw him up and down on a stretched canvas and inform him that he has arrived

in the third heaven. Finally, when the recipient has been shaken up sufficiently by means of this vigorous and repeated exercise, they show him Truth coming out of a well in the traditional costume. The assembly leaves for a few minutes, leaving the recipient face to face with Truth, after this the President, named the Very Excellent, hands him an emblematical arrow and whispers in his ear: *Edul-Pen-Cagu*, sublime word whose signification is: 'Do as you would be done by.' When the good Brothers re-enter the temple, the Knight of Eloquence makes known to the neophyte that his reception has taught him to raise himself above prejudices, superstitions and false doctrines in order to float in the three celestial regions of Intelligence, Conscience and Reason, corresponding to the political, social and material needs of Humanity."—*Masonry Exposed and Explained by Leo Taxil*.

This Thomas is not *deep* but very *high*.

Thomas: Of course, it borders somewhat on the ridiculous; but, you see Father, man is a social being; to be engaged at all times in *deep* studies would wear him out. Hence, to break the monotony, members must be pardoned for occasional digressions—it is so entertaining.

Father: Nothing more interesting, especially when the *best men* of the community see the following performance not once, but twice and three times: "And this deponent fur-

ther saith, that each candidate, no matter what may be his social position, is obliged to submit to the degrading ceremonies, described in FREEMASONRY ILLUSTRATED consisting in the first or Entered Apprentice degree of stripping the candidate to his shirt and drawers, and exchanging his drawers for a pair furnished him by the lodge, which fasten with strings; the left leg of them rolled up above the knee, the left foot bare, left breast bare, and a slip shod slipper on his right foot, a hoodwink over his eyes and a small rope, called a cable-tow, once around his neck; in the second, or Fellow Craft's degree, prepared the same, except the right foot, leg and breast are bare, and the cable-tow is twice around the naked right arm, above the elbow; in the third, or Master Mason's degree, both feet, legs and breasts are bare, and the cable-tow three times around his body, hoodwinked as before. His shirt is often taken off entirely in the third degree, and is turned around in either degree when it does not open in front. In each degree a horrible oath is taken; the penalty in the first degree being, cutting the throat and tearing out the tongue, in the second the breast torn open and heart plucked out, in the third, his body severed in twain and his bowels taken from thence and burned to ashes. In the third or Master Mason's degree they pretend to murder the candidate, bury him, and after fifteen days raise him to life on the 'five points of fellowship.'

In each of the Chapter degrees, similar murderous oaths are taken. In the first Chapter degree, which

is the fourth degree of Masonry, entitled Mark Master's degree, the candidate is in his shirt sleeves, both sleeves rolled up above the elbows, a cable-tow four times around his body, no hoodwink; in the Past Master's degree there is no special preparation; in the Most Excellent Master's degree he has a cable-tow six times around his body but no hoodwink; in the Royal Arch degree, three and only three are initiated at once, have coats off, are hoodwinked and are connected with a cable-tow, wound seven times around the body of each. The conductor of the candidates personates Moses, and a man, the Almighty at the *burning bush*; the miracles of Moses before Pharaoh are mimicked and also the dedication of the second temple at Jerusalem, and they pretend to find the Ark of the Covenant in an underground arch in the rubbish of Solomon's temple. The lodge room is termed the Tabernacle; the highest office, High Priest; the second, King; the third, Scribe; the fourth, Captain of the Host. The pretended ineffable name of God is given as the Grand Omnific or Royal Arch word.

And this deponent further saith that the signs, grips, words and passes, ritual and ceremonies, in general practice in Masonic lodges throughout the United States, are substantially the same, the *work* given in FREEMASONRY ILLUSTRATED being exactly as is practiced in lodges throughout the State of Michigan."

JACOB O. DOESBURG,

STATE OF MICHIGAN, }
County of Ottawa, } ss.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 21st day of October, A. D. 1879.

[Seal.]

ISAAC FAIRBANKS,

Notary Public in and for Ottawa Co., Mich.

This is picturesque. I have the picture before me, Thomas, but you can imagine it without seeing it.

Thomas: Silly as these ceremonies may seem, we must not forget that they are very innocent amusements. The blacksmith, the carpenter, the tiller of the soil, the store-keeper, the clerk, the banker: all stand sorely in need of light recreations and, as long as there is no harm in them, you have no reason to raise objections.

Father: I should not have said a word against these ceremonies, had you not called my attention to the *deep meaning* attached to them. However, let us consider the matter more seriously. I say Freemasonry is dangerous to the *school*, the *church* and the *state*.

CHAPTER VI.

SCHOOL, CHURCH AND STATE.

Thomas: Proceed, Father, and show how this society is dangerous to our school, the church and state.

Father: The Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Belgium, Brother Eugene Goblet de Alviella, in speaking on the 21st of November, 1886, to the boy and girl students of the free University of Brussels says: "The true science cannot be other than liberal," that is to say Masonic; hence the system of obligatory instruction adopted by Belgian Masonry whose official text is:

"1st. Fathers and widows shall be obliged to send their children to school.

2nd. Suppression of all religious instruction.

3rd. The publishing of the names of unwilling parents in a frame exposed in the guild halls.

4th. Condemnation of such fathers to a fine of one hundred francs, and, in case of insolvency to hard labor from one to thirty days in improving streets, or from one to five days in prison.

5th. As an extreme measure the child shall be taken from the parental charge."

In 1854 at the time of the feast of the Grand Orient of Belgium on the 24th of June, Belgian Masonry laid bare the four points on which it would be necessary to unite in the fight that was about to be undertaken for the triumph of Masonic truth:

“1st. Political and religious questions should be the matter for constant action among the secretly allied lodges.

2nd. The lodges ought to be well organized in their mutual efforts at home and with foreign secret societies and in such a manner that they may obey with one common impulse any agreed upon line of action.

3rd. These agreed upon lines of action will form a supreme law, which is not permitted to any one to either examine or discuss. The true Mason should incline before it and submit blindly.

4th. The questions for the order of the day are: the mysterious Masonic influence should have control of the State by one way or another, and the State should have complete control of all arrangements appertaining to the education of the people and public instruction; private charity should give way to public charity; it is necessary to obliterate from the Constitution religious liberty, especially of the Catholic religion, by restricting speech in the pulpit and by forbidding people gathering together for a religious object.

5th. This programme must be carried out by force if necessary."

Thomas : There is nothing alarming about speeches made at feasts, especially when many and rich courses are served and when the guests indulge freely in delicate wines.

Father : Though this is true to a great extent, yet it is a well established fact that what is in a sober man comes out of him when he is hilarious by imbibing too freely, or emptying a *charged cannon*, as masons would express it. You know, their language is different from ours. With them a glass is a *cannon*; to fill a glass is to *charge a cannon*; to eat is to *masticate*; a plate is a *tile*; a knife is a *sword*; cheers are *batteries*; banquets are *works* of the table, and to cap it all, an orator does not make a speech, but a *bit of architecture*.

Be this as it may, Masons are not always engaged at *works* of the table and then they are just as responsible as other people. Therefore let me quote the following from the CHURCH PROGRESS:

"A Freemason publication in Europe, the GAZETTE DU MIDI, lately published a circular which will open the eyes of a certain sleepy class of Catholics to the aims of modern Free-

masonry and the importance these people attach to securing full control of the education of the children in every land. This circular declares that the aim of Freemasonry is to rescue Catholics from the slavery in which their religion keeps them. To accomplish this Catholic influence must be gotten rid of in the schools, thus:

‘Teaching and education in the schools should in an especial manner pre-occupy the brethern. They will keep watch in order that Catholics may be excluded both from educational posts and from all public offices so that the schools of the city as well as the colleges, lyceums and technical institutions may show themselves indifferent or hostile to Catholicism, and all instruction, excluding religious sentiment altogether, may be given on a purely rationalistic basis. The superior schools should be in the hands only of the brethern, or of their allies, the liberals and free-thinkers; the greater the weakness hitherto displayed in the struggle in this direction the more obvious is it that the time has now come to engage in it with energy and boldness.’”

Again: “In order to show how diabolical are the principles of Masonry in its German home, we append the following extracts from the re-

cent Masonic manifesto against Christian education. Here is what the German Freemasons demand:

‘First.—The extinction of all ecclesiastical power and authority.

Second—Complete separation of Church and school. The clergy to have no control or interference in the school; to be excluded from all positions of teacher, inspector or local boards; all religious orders, male and female, to be removed from teaching, and any and all obstacles to be placed in the way of the same being placed in charge of free-thinking systems having

NO AFFILIATION WITH THE CLERGY.

Third.—Abolition of all religious training. Vulgar religious teaching and training produces moral chaos in youthful minds and clouds the intellect of the children; it corrupts and debases man. The development of the mind and reason is retarded, and prevents the elevation and rise of the emotional nature. Therefore, irreligious schools and books, no Bible and no teachers of religion.

Fourth—The de-christianizing of the family.

Fifth.—Emancipation of women. The establishment of irreligious or secular semi-

naries for girls in charge of emancipated teachers. Training of the girls to a 'healthful humanitarianism.'"

"It cannot be disputed," says the *ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*, "that the German, Dutch, Belgian and French magazines of the craft exhibit a tone which is not favorable to Christianity regarded as a special revelation."

The *POLITICAL DICTIONARY* of Rottock assures us that the society lent its aid to achieve the evil work of the French Revolution.

Guerike, another Protestant historian states:

"Freemasonry has had an undoubted influence on positive Christianity. It has unceasingly labored with its cold hammer to beat down the edifice of Faith, that thus the Church of Christ being reduced to ruins, it might erect a new structure, even if this should be no other than a second Tower of Babel." (Tom: 2. p. 553.) *Sapienti sat.* This, Thomas, since you still pretend to be a Catholic ought to satisfy you. But, let us continue our researches. Barrnel says: "The grade of Kadosh is the soul of Freemasonry, and the final object of its plots is the reintroduction of absolute liberty and equality through the destruction of all royalty and

abrogation of all religious worship." (Memoires du Jacobinisme, vol. ii, p. 222.)

Says Lord Plunket : "I consider an association bound by a secret oath to be extremely dangerous on the principles of the common law, inasmuch as they subtract the subject from the State, and interpose between him and his allegiance to the King." (Secret warfare of Freemasonry.)

According to the JOURNAL DE BRUXELLES, 28th of November 1864, the Antwerp Lodge is responsible for the following : "The teaching of the catechism is the greatest obstacle to the development of a child's faculties. The intervention of a priest in education deprives the children of all moral, logical, and rational teaching."

Thomas : Beyond a doubt, these men, not to speak of certain lodges, have overstepped the bounds; it must be remembered, however, that the whole order is not responsible for the eccentricities of a few members.

Father : The ritual for admission of a Scotch Ancient, or a Grand Master, runs as follows :

"Friendship is the sacred bond which unites together all the Brethern of our Craft; for however much scattered they may be over the

face of the earth, they all compose only one body, because one is their origin and one their aim; one the mysteries into which they are initiated; one the path by which they are led; one the gauge and measure applied to each and all of them; and one the spirit by which they are animated." (Eckert, *Die Frage der Staatl. Anerk.* p. 12.)

Thomas : Taking for granted that masonry is masonry from one end of the world to the other, I apprehend no danger from this source in so great a country as ours. The number of secret societies is legion—new ones are being formed almost every day—the K. P.'s are of late origin, and the A. P. A.'s are scarcely one year old. For one to watch the maneuvers of the other with a jealous eye is in the course of human nature. Republicans keep a watchful eye on Democrats and *vice versa*; thus a healthy equilibrium is maintained and, consequently, the American people are protected against dangerous invasions.

Father : Your reasoning seems plausible; but it is void of sound principles. When we are so situated that we must make a choice between two evils, we, of course, choose the lesser. We have seen, I think, the evil tendency of all secret combines. If this be true,

it would be immoral to weaken the one by the creation of another—it would be to sin with the intention of doing good, or to steal five dollars from you to assist a poor neighbor. Theft is theft whether the proceeds be used for holy or unholy purposes.

On the other hand, admitting that some secret societies are worse than others, all are irresponsible. Let me quote what the CHURCH PROGRESS had to say after the Mafia trouble.

“The killing of the Sicilian unfortunates by an armed mob in New Orleans last week points to a very forcible moral in regard to the danger of secret societies. The Mafia is a secret society. It is a society organized, we are told, for the purpose of assassination. It is necessarily secret in its constitution and its methods. Naturally enough secrecy and assassination go hand in hand. Secrecy is always dangerous. Vice and crime always seek secrecy. They avoid publicity, and in self-protection hide themselves from public view. If then secrecy be the natural and proper ally of iniquity, is it not a fair inference that societies which make secrecy an essential and fundamental law are bad in themselves?

A secret society is always irresponsible. It is not answerable to the law of the consciences

of its members. But of what value or restraint is that? Witness the case of the Mafia. Its conscience regards murder as perfectly proper, and its very end and object is assassination. A secret society is *ipso facto* a menace to society.

Think of the following article, printed in Sparta, Ill.; under the auspices of the A. P. A.'s:

“ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS LEO XIII. by divine Providence, Pope.

To the Jesuits (?), Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See of the entire World:

For the Temporal reign of the Popes in the land discovered by Christopher Columbus, known as the United States of America.

* * * * *

Moreover, we proclaim the people of the United States of America to have forfeited all right to rule said Republic and also all dominion, dignity and privileges appertaining to it. We likewise declare that all subjects of every rank and condition in the United States and every individual who has taken an oath of loyalty to the United States in any way whatever, may be absolved from said oath, as also

from all duty, fidelity or obedience on or about the 5th of September, 1893, when the Catholic Congress shall convene at Chicago, Illinois, as we shall exonerate them from all engagements, and on or about the feast of Ignatius Loyola in the year of our Lord 1893, it will be the duty of the faithful to exterminate all heretics found within the jurisdiction of the United States of America.

As the circulation of this bull, by sending to all places, would be a matter of difficulty, it is commanded that copies of it be taken and signed by Jesuit notaries, subscribed by a bishop, and sealed with the seal of our court; they will then have the same power and efficacy as the presents here.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, on the 25th of December, 1892, the fifteenth year of our Pontificate.

LEO XIII., Pope."

Thomas: This is unpardonable ignorance and malice too. Thank God, not many societies have gone to this extent.

Father: This is true; however, if you closely examine the matter in question you will find that those secret institutions are like Protestant Churches. They may fight among themselves, but they stand united when an at-

tack is to be made on the Catholic Church—in their estimation she, and she alone is the death blow to human liberties; yet nowhere is liberty so curtailed as in a lodge.

Thomas : How so?

Father : “The power of a master in his lodge is absolute. He is the supreme arbiter of all questions of the order, so far as the meeting is concerned; nor can any appeal be made from his decision to that of the lodge. For no misdemeanor, however great, can he be tried by his lodge. * * * This is the decision that has been made on the subject by every Grand Lodge in the United States which has entertained the question, and it may now be considered as a settled law of Masonry.

* * * He is to be treated with the utmost reverence and respect while in the chair, and his commands must be implicitly obeyed.

* * * He has the right of congregating his lodge whenever he thinks proper; and of closing it at any time that in his judgment may seem best.”—*Mackey’s Lexicon, Art. Master of a Lodge.*

“The Mason is obedient to the Master; the Master and the lodge to the Grand Lodge.”—*Mackey’s Lexicon, Art. Obedience.*

The Venerable, explaining the obligations

that devolve upon an apprentice, says: "The first of these duties is an *absolute* silence on all that you may hear or discover among us The third of your duties will be to conform to the General Statutes of Freemasonry, to obey the particular laws of this Lodge and those of the particular rite practiced herein, and to *execute whatever you shall be ordered in the name of the majority of this assembly.*" The italics are mine, Thomas. Think of the word *absolute*, consider the expression, *whatever you shall be ordered*, recall to your mind the iron-clad oath and remember Morgan's assassination. Then ask yourself the question: are these dupes and votaries of secrecy free-men, or slaves most abject?

Thomas: Evidently a man might be asked to *execute* something diametrically opposed to the dictates of his conscience. But you must not lose sight of the fact that all men *do not think alike*; even in the Catholic Church there seems to be quite a difference of opinion on the question under consideration. If priests, bishops and even archbishops differ so widely on the all-absorbing topic of the day, how can you expect a layman to submit his judgment unconditionally to your views when, at least from a wordly aspect, there is

so much at stake? Why do not the authorities tell us at once and in unequivocal language what is, and what is not forbidden? I must confess I am growing tired of being kept in suspense.

Father: Simple as it may seem to you, the term *forbidden* is vague and very indefinite when used in reference to the matter under consideration. Transgressors of the law always get the benefit of the doubt. Therefore, law-givers cannot be too plain in the use of their words; therefore, let me ask you, what do you mean by *forbidden*?

Thomas: When I speak of *forbidden* societies, I mean those with which Catholics cannot affiliate themselves without depriving themselves of the sacraments of the Church and of the rights to a Christian burial; to use one word *ex-communicate* themselves. Plainer than this I cannot express myself.

Father: I understand you, and am now fully prepared to answer your question, provided you answer one more of mine.

Thomas: What is it? To get to understand this vexed question I am willing to do anything.

Father: Do you mean a society *ex-communicated by name*?

Thomas : I do.

Father : Just now, only the Freemasons and Carbonari are ex-communicated *by name*. For this assertion, the Council of Baltimore, approved of by the Holy Father, is my authority.

Thomas : Beyond a doubt, Pope Leo XIII. condemned the Freemasons in this manner, in the late Encyclical *Humanum Genus*. Have they been condemned *by name* prior to this time?

Father : Freemasonry has been condemned from the beginning:

Pope Clement XII. condemned it in his Bull of the 18th of April, 1738 ; Pope Benedict XIV., on the 18th of March, 1751 ; Pius VII., on the 13th of September, 1821 ; Leo XII., on 13th of March, 1826 ; Gregory XVI., on 15th August, 1832 ; Pius IX., on 12th of October, 1869 ; and Leo XIII., on 20th of April, 1884.

Thomas : Speaking of Pius IX., it is said that he was a Freemason.

Father : How can you reiterate an objection exploded so often? It is a waste of time to talk about it. Yet let me quote:

“Pius IX., as a vigilant pilot over the vessel of the Church, in spite of the tempest

which assails him in his own person, has spoken in his turn ; and recalling, in his Allocution of the 25th of September, 1865, the warnings given to Freemasonry by his predecessors, he continues thus : ‘Unfortunately these warnings have not had the hoped-for result ; and we look upon it, therefore, as a duty to condemn this Society anew ; seeing that, from ignorance perhaps, the idea might arise that it is inoffensive ; that it has no other object but benevolence, and could not ; therefore, be a source of peril to the Church of God.’

It is, in fact, in that illusion that the snare and bait of Freemasonry consists. The Holy Father, after having pointed this out, adds :

‘We condemn this Masonic Society, and all other societies of the same nature, and which, though differing in form, tend to the same object, under the same pains and penalties as those specified in the constitutions of our predecessors ; and this concerns all Christians of every condition, rank, or dignity all over the world.’ ”

In his constitution *Apostolicæ Sedis*, in the month of Oct., 1869, Pius IX. condemns *by name* the Freemasons and Carbonari. What duplicity, had he been a member of the masonic order!

Thomas : They say, some priests are members in good standing.

Father : *They say so*; but invariably they fail in giving us the address of any particular individual. If they are members in good standing, why not mention their names? It is a masonic blind, Thomas.

Thomas : Do you mean to say, Father, that only Freemasons and Carbonari are forbidden?

Father : I do not say so; however, I do say that Freemasons and Carbonari are forbidden not only *by name*, but also under the penalty of ex-communication.

Thomas : Your liberality surpasses my most sanguine expectations. Who would have thought it! According to your views I may become an Odd Fellow and not incur the censures of the Church. More no one can expect; I never did intend to join the Freemasons. By the way, who is authorized to forbid societies *by name*, and under the penalty of *ex-communication*?

Father : The Holy Father, and *he alone*.

Thomas : The reason I ask the question is, some time ago I read in the papers an article on forbidden societies by the Most Rev. Archbishop Katzer, D. D. Says he :

“Before the opening of the Vatican Council, Pius IX., in October, 1869 issued the Constitution *Apostolicæ Sedis*, for the purpose of reducing the number of Ecclesiastical Censures (therefore also of ex-communications). As the ‘Odd Fellows’ are not mentioned in this Constitution, it is inferred that they are not *expressly and by name* ex-communicated, and that if they had been so before, the express ex-communication had been removed by virtue of this Constitution. This inference is strengthened by a remark of the late Cardinal Franzelin, who with the American Archbishops prepared the subject-matter for the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. However, both the intention of Pius IX., namely, to reduce the number of ex-communications, and the remark of Cardinal Franzelin, prove at the most, that the Odd Fellows are no longer ex-communicated *expressly by name*; but by no means that the declaration of the Congregation of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition has been rescinded. Rome may set aside a positive ecclesiastical penalty, but will never contradict itself, will never declare at one time that a certain society is included in the Pontifical Bulls which prohibit secret societies, and again, that is not forbidden. If,

therefore, the ecclesiastical legislation has changed anything in this question, it is only in this, that it has removed the express ex-communication. We believe, with entirely good reason, that the 'Odd Fellows' are a society *expressly and by name forbidden*, waiving the question of their being also ex-communicated."

You see, Father, the Archbishop and yourself are at variance on this point.

Father: Not at all, sir; the Archbishop does not say that the Odd Fellows are *ex-communicated*, and he does not say positively that they are forbidden *by name*.

Thomas: Well, then it is not forbidden to join the Odd Fellows! For all practical purposes, this Order would satisfy me.

Father: I have neither said it is forbidden, nor that it is not forbidden; and I am not going to do so. It is the Holy Father's prerogative to decide questions of this nature. I simply stated the fact that there is no doubt whatever as to the Freemasons and Carbonari. It is true a society may be *simply* forbidden, as for instance, cursing and sinful swearing. A member of this society would not incur ex-communication. On the other hand, a member of another society, not forbidden *by name*,

might incur this penalty. The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore says :

“Not, therefore, are to be deemed lawful those which have not been expressly condemned, and the faithful, especially the younger portion, that they may be better guarded from all danger of evil, are to be gravely admonished that all societies are to be carefully avoided, which in the opinion of the Bishop may in any way be hurtful to faith or morality.”

Therefore, not to heed the warnings of the Archbishop you have so well quoted, would be bad policy in you. It is always good to be on the safe side. You might regret having taken the step.

Thomas : To ask a direct question: would I be permitted to become a K. of P.? I would like to be something.

Father : At least, you are trying very hard. But the Council just quoted makes it my duty to warn you against this society on account of its *secrecy*.

Thomas : Suppose, however, I were perfectly willing to retrace my steps, should the Church speak authoritatively against this organization at any future time, would I be allowed to approach the sacraments as some to my knowledge do?

Father: Yes, sir; and this is true of all societies not positively forbidden, either *by name* or on general principles. But, remember, few have the moral courage to *step down and out*. By the time you are thoroughly initiated, have formed new associations and invested your money, you may not, and most probably will not be one of the few. In the first place, give a good example to the younger and weaker members of our Church; in the second place, do not weaken but strengthen her by your influence, and lastly, listen to the voice of our bishops, who in the divine economy have a right and a duty to teach us, and, consequently, we are bound to hear them.

Let me conclude with two quotations: one from the Rt. Rev. Francis Silas Chatard, D. D., Bp. of Vincennes, and the other from the Bishops assembled in Council at Baltimore:

“The life of a Catholic thus associating with non-Catholics, in the intimate fellowship called for by the circumstances, makes him critical of the Church and an easy prey to the liberalism of the time, and generates disgust for a devout life. To be sure, where a man is forced to enter upon such associations, the proximate occasion of coldness and of neglect of religion by fidelity to duty may be made

remote; but the chances are against this. We therefore, must earnestly exhort you, Reverend Brethern of the Clergy, to deter, with prudence, all from joining any of the secret societies not formally condemned, and to throw all your influence in favor of Catholic societies already instituted and approved, or to be instituted with proper approval of the Church. And we bid you, Dearly Beloved Children of the Laity, to hearken to our words, to follow the spirit of the Church. That Church has the spirit of God, and even where she gives no official declaration she is guided by that spirit and animated with the prudence, which is from Heaven. Under her guidance we walk surely and safely in the path of life everlasting, gathering as we go the merit which is to be our title to eternal reward. May God bless us all with that for which the wise Solomon prayed (III. Kings iii, 9.), a docile heart, obedient to his Spouse, the Church."

"Whenever, therefore, the Church has spoken authoritatively with regard to any society, her decision ought to be final for every Catholic. He ought to know that the Church has not acted hastily nor unwisely nor mistakenly; he should be convinced that any

worldly advantages which he might derive in such a society, would be a poor substitute for the membership, the sacraments and the blessings of the Church of Christ; he should have the courage of his religious convictions, and stand firm to faith and conscience. But if he be inclined or asked to join a society on which the church has passed no sentence, then let him, as a reasonable and Christian man, examine into it carefully, and not join the society until he is satisfied as to its lawful character.

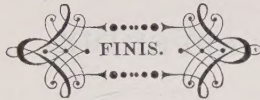
There is one characteristic which is always a strong presumption against a society, and that is secrecy. Our Divine Lord Himself has laid down the rule: 'Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his works may not be reproved; But he that doth truth cometh to the light that his works may be made manifest, because they are done in God.' (John iii., 20, 21.) When, therefore, associations veil themselves in secrecy and darkness, the presumption is against them, and it rests with them to prove that there is nothing evil in them.

But if any society's obligation be such as to bind its members to secrecy, even when rightly questioned by competent authority,

then such a society puts itself outside the limits of approval; and no one can be a member of it and at the same time be admitted to the sacraments of the Catholic Church. The same is true of any organization that binds its members to a promise of blind obedience—to accept in advance and to obey whatsoever orders, lawful or unlawful, that may emanate from its chief authorities; because such a promise is contrary both to reason and to conscience. And if a society works or plots, either openly or in secret, against the Church, or against lawful authorities, then to be a member of it, is to be excluded from the membership of the Catholic Church.

These authoritative rules, therefore, ought to be the guide of all Catholics in their relations with societies. No Catholic can conscientiously join, or continue in, a body in which he knows that any of these condemned features exist. If he has joined it in good faith and the objectionable features become known to him afterwards, or if any of these evil elements creep into a society which was originally good, it becomes his duty to leave it at once. And even if he were to suffer loss or run risk by leaving such a society or refusing to join it, he should do his duty and

brave the consequences, regardless of human considerations."



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APPENDIX.

Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias and Sons of Temperance are now forbidden, under the penalty of excommunication, unless the Apostolic Delegate sees fit to allow a *nominal membership*, for the following reasons (*American Ecclesiastical Review*):

“Nevertheless, there may be cases—though they must of necessity be rare—where (1) there exists no active co-operation; (2) in which at the same time there is no danger of giving actual scandal; (3) where the person himself had joined the society in good faith, not knowing that it was forbidden; (4) where the loss sustained by the withdrawal is of a serious nature; (5) while there is no danger that the temporal interests involved constitute an occasion of turning the penitent or the members of his

family from the true faith; in short, *where all these conditions are verified in one case*, the confessor, or pastor, or bishop has sufficient cause for making application in order to obtain permission to give absolution to a person who allows his name to remain on the membership-list of the society for the purpose of holding a sort of legal title to certain temporary benefits toward the creation of which he has advanced money. Similar cases would be those in which a person has borrowed money from a society on mortgage, to be repaid by installments, or in form of dues; or where he holds securities which become worthless by his withdrawal from the society, etc., etc.

'In such cases the Apostolic Delegate is empowered, according to his judgment of the case, to allow a mere *nominal* membership to continue for the sole purpose of securing for the applicant an external title to what really belongs to him, or to shield him from an injury, the avoidance of which does not in any way identify him with the doubtful and dangerous character of the society from a moral point of view.'

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